

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended): An image forming method for forming a toner image on a recording medium, comprising the steps of:

supporting a latent image on a latent image support;

using toner to develop the latent image to form a toner image on said latent image support;

electrostatically transferring the toner image on said latent image support onto a recording medium; and

bringing a heating member into close contact with the toner image electrostatically transferred onto said recording medium and thereby fixing said toner image to said recording medium,

wherein ~~the~~ an estimated average halftone granularity of the toner image after developing but before electrostatic transfer is 0.25 or less.

2. (Currently Amended): An image forming apparatus, comprising:

a latent image support for supporting a latent image;

developing means for using toner to develop the latent image on said latent image support;

transfer means for electrostatically transferring the toner image to form a toner image on said latent image support onto a recording medium; and

fixing means for bringing a heating member into close contact with the toner image electrostatically transferred onto said recording medium and thereby fixing said toner image to said recording medium,

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